(b) if so, under what circumstances the aircrash took place;

(c) what are the details including outcome of the enquiry, if any conducted in this regard;

(d) the number of passengers injured;

(e) the extent of loss of their baggage, etc. and compensation paid to them by Government;

(f) whether it is a fact that in most of the European and other countries there is for much thicker than in our country, and yet hundreds of flights land and take off every day in those countries; and

(g) if so, what safety measures Government propose to take to improve the situation at Indian airports to avoid aircraft accidents?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) to (c) The accident is under investigation by a Court of Inquiry appointed under Rule 75 of the Aircraft Rules 1937.

(d) Six persons had sustained serious injuries in the incident.

(e) Out of 152 passengers (including four infants) on board, claims have been received from 113 passengers. Baggage claims including exgratia have been settled for a total amount of Rs. 10.74 lakhs in respect of 79 passengers, so far.

(f) Yes, Sir.

(g) Airports are equipped with essential navigational/landing equipment to ensure safety of operations. The facilities are however upgraded from time to time depending upon requirements and technological advancement.

Challenge of private airlines operators

37. SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM:
SHRI S. K. T. RAMACHANDRAN:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether any estimate has been prepared of losses suffered by the Indian Airlines due to the ongoing strike by the pilots and inept handling of the situation arising therefrom;

(b) whether advantage was taken of the prevailing situation by other airliners that were allowed to ply within the domain of Indian Airlines;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) what are the details of private airliners now operating in the country to handle domestic air-traffic with comparative seats of Indian Airlines; and

(e) in what manner the Indian Airlines management propose to meet the challenge of private airlines operators who are tempting the senior pilots with huge salaries and perks?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) to (d) Indian airlines has assessed its cash loss; on account of strike by its pilots from 10th December, 1992 to 24th January, 1993 at Rs. 46.60 crores. During the period of the strike, occupancy of the flights of other airlines such as Air India and Vayudoot as well as air taxi operators registered a significant increase. Of a total of 11 air taxi operators permit issued by DGCA, validity of one expired in September, 1991 and has not been renewed: one other operator has discontinued operation due to grounding of its aircraft; the remaining 9 are now in operation, Besides No Objection Certificate has been issued under the sir taxi scheme to 31 parties who have yet to complete the prescribed formalities to be eligible for ais taxi operators pehmit. In the year 1992 the average number of passengers carried daily was about 2000 in the case of the air taxi operators taken together as against 22000 carried by Indian Airlines.

(e) while the senior pilots on roll are not bound by any bond, all the pilots who

have joined the Airlines recently are required to execute a bond for Rs. 10 lakhs with the stipulation to serve Indian Airlines for a minimum period of 10 years in the first instance and for a further period of 10 years after every conversion/endorsement. It has also been decided to recruit and train pilots in sufficient number to take care of the exodus of pilots.

Allocations for Priority PLI Scheme

38. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) what steps have been taken by Government during the last five years for priority Postal Life Insurance Scheme in Gujarat;

(b) what has been the total allocation of this scheme District-wise during the year 1991-92 and till 31st December, 1992 during 1992-93;

(c) what targets have been fixed for the years 1992-93 and 1993-94; and

(d) what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) and (b) The following steps were taken:

(i) Meeting and drives organised through development Officers and field Offices.

(ii) Publicity made through Hoardings, Neon Sign Boards and Advertisements in Newspapers.

(iii) Publicity through Personal contact and distribution of souvenir items to prospective Insurants.

(iv) PLI clients' meets were organised.

(v) PLI service counter was established in Circle Office for effective after sale service.

(vi) Expenditure on publicity was as follows.

1988-89 — Rs. 1,21,366
1989-90 — Rs. 1,44,934
1990-91 — Rs. 1,31,717
1991-92 — Rs. 1,79,578
1 — Rs. 34,400 (up to Dec. 92)

No District-wise allocations of targets have been fixed since the scheme is conducted by the Circle Office through Circle field staff.

(c) and (d) Target for the year 1992-93 is Rs. 127 Crores for Gujarat.

Target for the year 1993-94 has not been fixed yet.

New Telephone Connections

SHRI S. K. T. RAMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state the number of new telephone, telex and fax connections effected in the country during the year 1991-92 and how many connections are anticipated to be effected during the current year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): The numbers effected during 1991-92 for:

Telephone — 735410
Telex — 1795

The number anticipated to be effected during 1992-93 are given below: —

Telephones — 8.5 Lakhs
Telex — 1902 Nos.

Fax is a privately owned accessory connected to the existing telephone lines. The telephone subscribers wanting to connect FAX machine on their teleprone line, obtain a permission by paying a licence fee to do so from the Department Hence the question of releasing new fax connections does not arise.